

1/20/06

Subject: Protecting ecosystems

Paul A. Marshall  
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I am writing to offer my comments on the draft environmental impact report/statement for the South Delta Improvements Program, particularly regarding the part of the project that would increase the maximum pumping limit for the state water project's Delta pumps to 8,500 cubic feet per second. I strongly believe that this project is unnecessary and could further damage a Bay-Delta ecosystem that has already been harmed by excessive water diversions.

I urge you to withdraw the draft environmental impact report and issue a new draft with a preferred alternative that includes a significant reduction in Delta water diversions. The analysis of this alternative should include potential environmental benefits, how water conservation and other proven water management tools can help the state meet its future water needs, and how such a reduction, combined with investments in other water supply sources, could improve the reliability of urban water supplies.

I also urge you to include, in the new preferred alternative, at least as much water dedicated to ecosystem restoration and protection as is required by the state's plan to protect and restore the delta -- the CALFED Bay-Delta Plan. The Department of Water Resources should work to restore the delta protections in that plan that have been undermined during the past five years.

Finally, I urge you to issue a full draft environmental impact report on the proposal to increase the state water project's maximum pumping limit once improved scientific information is available regarding the causes of the delta's decline and once this decline has been reversed.

Thank you very much for your time. I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

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